

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Applicant has received the Office action dated October 22, 2004, in which the Examiner: 1) rejected claims 1, 5, 9, 13, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over *Cheng et al.* (U.S. Pat. No. 6,151,336, hereinafter *Cheng*); 2) objected to dependent claims 2-4, 6-8, 10-12, and 15-19; and 3) objected to the drawings.

With this Response, the Applicant: 1) adds new claims 20 and 21; 2) cancels claim 9; 3) amends the drawings; 4) amends the specification; and 5) amends claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 10, 13, and 15. Therefore, claims 1-8 and 10-21 remain pending.

I. SPECIFICATION

The specification has been amended, at paragraph 0001 (page 1, line 11 of the original specification), to include the serial number and filing date of the related patent application.

The specification has also been amended, at paragraph 0066 (page 11, line 8 of the original specification), to include a reference numeral designation for the second occurrence of the demultiplexer control 142.

II. OBJECTIONS

A. Drawings

The Examiner objected to Figure 8 because the reference numeral designations for some of the blocks are inconsistent with the specification. Specifically, data recovery modules 128, 134 and multiplexer 130 are not consistent with the specification. The Applicant thanks the Examiner for bringing these clerical mistakes to his attention and hereby amends Figure 8 as illustrated in the Appendix.

B. Claims

The Examiner objected to dependent claims 2-4, 6-8, 10-12, and 15-19, but stated that they would be in a condition for allowance if rewritten in independent form. The Applicant has rewritten claims 2, 6, 10, and 15 in independent form and respectfully submits that claims 2-4, 6-8, 10-12, and 15-19 are in a condition for allowance.

III. REJECTIONS UNDER § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 5, 13, and 14 as allegedly obvious over *Cheng* in light of observations made by the Examiner. The Applicant respectfully traverses because *Cheng* fails to teach or suggest every claim element. For example, claim 1, as amended, recites (emphasis added) "rotating a lane assignment ... wherein rotating the lane assignment includes performing link training procedures." A close examination of *Cheng*, however, reveals that no type of link training is employed or even suggested. Likewise, claim 5, as amended, recites (emphasis added) that "upon startup, the data is assigned to the transmission lanes without regard to the lane identifier." *Cheng* is similarly deficient in its teachings regarding this claim element. In fact, every indication from *Cheng* is that lane identification is necessary before data may be assigned to lanes. See, e.g., Col. 7, line 59 through Col. 8, line 8; Figure 3 depicting ID verifying unit 660. Accordingly, claims 3 and 5 are not rendered obvious by *Cheng* for at least these reasons.

Lastly, claims 13-14 have been amended to depend on independent claim 10, and are in a condition of allowance for at least this reason.

IV. CONCLUSION

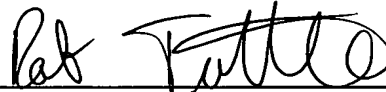
In the course of the foregoing discussions, The Applicant may have at times referred to claim elements in shorthand fashion, or may have focused on a particular claim element. This discussion should not be interpreted to mean that the other elements can be ignored or dismissed. The claims must be viewed as a whole, and each element of the claims must be considered when determining the patentability of the claims.

The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. It is believed that no extensions of time or fees are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and any fees

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required (including fees for net addition of claims) are hereby authorized to be charged to Hewlett-Packard Development Company's Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted,



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Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Fig. 8. This sheet replaces the original sheet including Figs. 8. In Figure 8, previously omitted elements 130 and 134 have been added. Element 128 has been corrected to be consistent with the specification.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

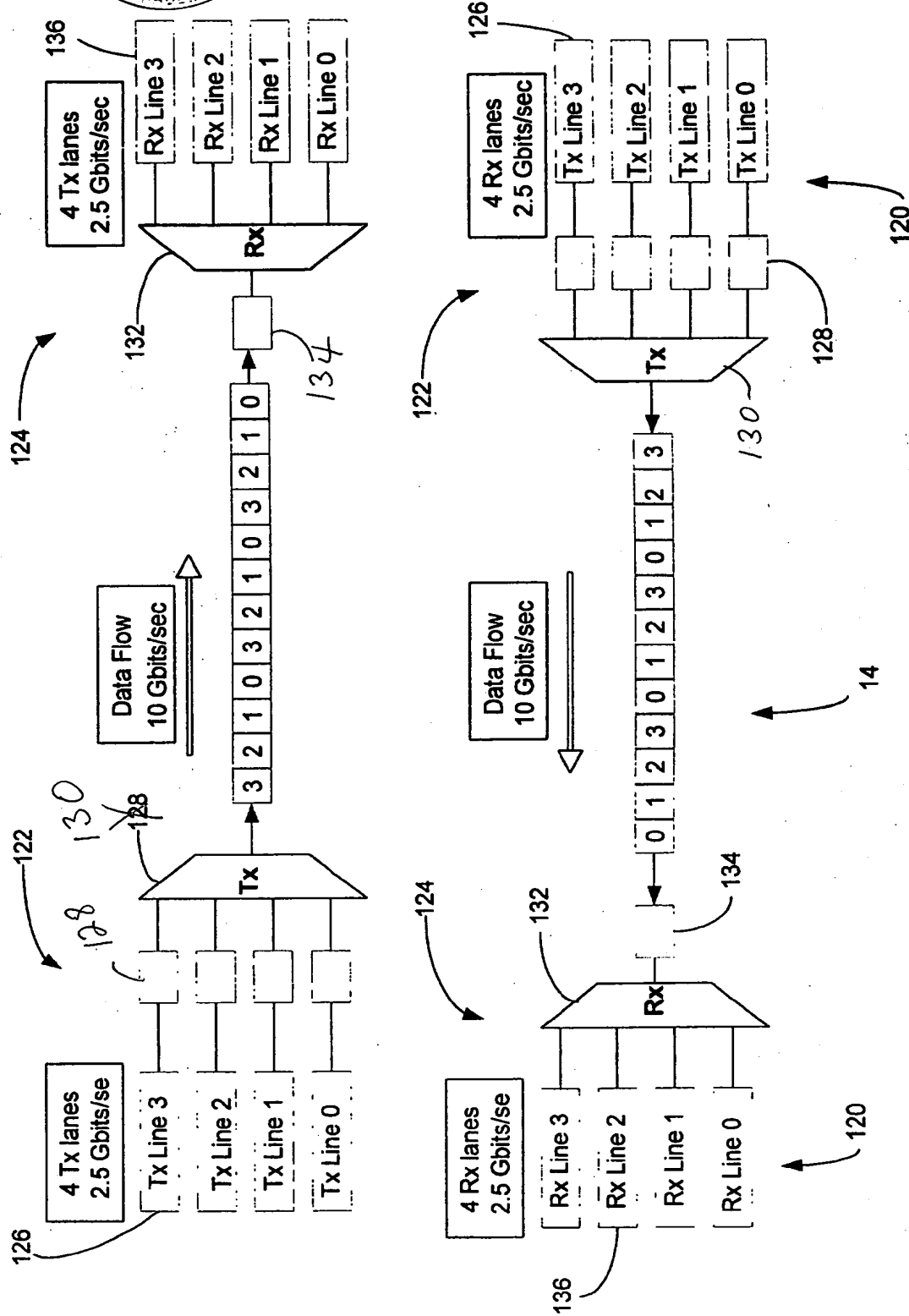


FIG. 8